

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

ISSUED BY THE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

9 MARCH 1963

~~TOP SECRET~~

1. Syria

a. We still do not know the composition of the revolutionary command which has appointed a 20-man civilian cabinet--a mixture of Baathists, pro-Nasirists, and middle-of-the road Arab nationalists.

b. We expect one of these groups--most likely the Baathists--to try to take charge, and the coalition may not last long. Salah al-Din Bitar--Premier and Foreign Minister--is one of the cofounders of the Baathist party.

c. Bitar was Foreign Minister in several left-wing cabinets prior to the union with the UAR.

d. The regime has declared its solidarity with the "liberated" Arab states of Iraq, UAR, Algeria, and Yemen and has declined offers of military assistance from Iraq and the UAR.

Resistance, such as it was, ended yesterday noon.

e. Former Prime Minister Azm has sought asylum in the Turkish embassy in Damascus.

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f. Jordan has declared a state of emergency [redacted]

Po-

tential troublemakers are being rounded up. Both King Husayn and Prince Faysal cannot but feel even more uneasily that they are next.

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2. Haiti

a. The latest (and likeliest) of many plans to overthrow Duvalier is that of a small band of some twenty plotters who intend to capture him in the palace on 15 March or as soon thereafter as possible.

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b. Clement Barbot, able and ruthless former secret police chief and confidential secretary to Duvalier, is probably behind the plan. Barbot escaped into hiding last August after nine months house arrest preceded by a year and a half in prison.

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3. Afghanistan

a. King Zahir apparently has triumphed in a showdown with Prime Minister Daud, although we do not yet have official confirmation of reports that Daud and his cabinet have resigned.

b. Daud and Foreign Minister Naim are said to have been offered the choice of leaving the country or remaining as respected senior citizens. Daud addresses the nation today.

c. A caretaker cabinet of civil servants will probably take over until the King decides on a successor government which will be responsive to his wishes.

d. With the king in control, Afghanistan's relations with the bloc will probably become more cautious and correct. Zahir is also likely to make more of an effort to resolve Afghan-Pakistan differences.

4. Cuba

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c. The Soviet passenger ship Baltika, which just completed a voyage from Cuba to the USSR carrying some 190 Cubans and more than 200 Soviet personnel, is again on its regular run back to Cuba. It is expected to reach Havana around 22 March.

d. The Soviet passenger ship Admiral Nakhimov has probably now arrived in Havana. It is the largest of the passenger ships on the Cuban run, having a troop-load capacity of nearly 5,000.

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5. Yemen-UAR-
Saudi Arabia

a. Ambassador Bunker returns to Washington this afternoon with word from Prince Faysal that he will agree "in principle" to stop aiding the royalists if he can be assured the UAR will get out.

b. Nasir will probably balk at the form Faysal wants these assurances to take--to wit: a cessation of attacks on Saudi territory, a cease-fire, and withdrawal of UAR forces and equipment from the field to marshalling areas.

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e. After a difficult, week-long push southward from Marib, UAR and Yemeni troops claim to have secured the border village of Harib. This is in the poorly-demarcated border area adjacent to the British-protected Sheikdom of Beihan and we expect border incursions and clashes to increase.

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6. Cambodia

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Peiping refused to provide foreign exchange assistance. The Chinese would only offer technical help and some future barter trade.

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b.

Cambodia will be receiving six MIG-17s from the USSR within about a month. Cambodia will be sending personnel to the USSR for pilot and maintenance training.

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c. Sihanouk is making it clear that his deference to the Bloc on foreign policy questions is not matched by softness toward Communists at home. Annoyed by leftist exploitation of student rioting while he was away, he has launched a sharp attack on domestic leftists and is proceeding with a government shakeup, having dismissed his cabinet which included some left-wingers.

NOTES

- A. Britain--Common Market Efforts to find some kind of interim economic tie between Britain and the Common Market have ended.

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- B. Laos-Soviet Bloc At the end of its visit in Warsaw, the Laotian royal party subscribed to a highly unneutral communiqué toeing Moscow's foreign policy line all the way. It went well beyond anything Polish Foreign Minister Rapacki was able to get out of the Yugoslavs when he was in Belgrade last fall.

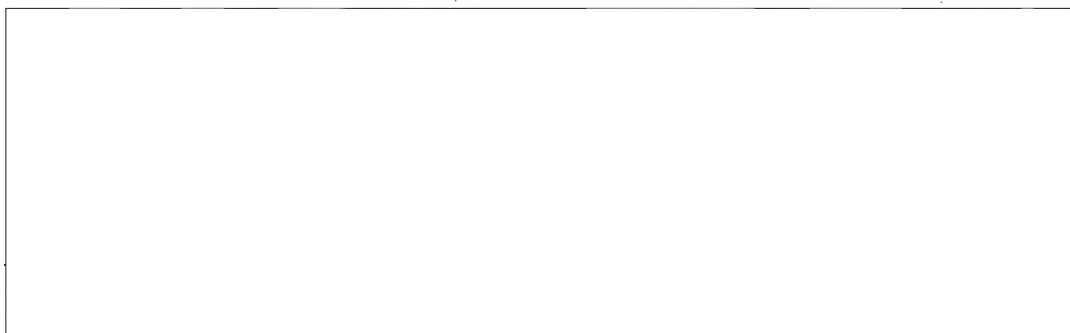
- C. Brazil-France Brazil has started disbanding the naval task force it had kept patrolling coastal waters since the start of the "lobster war" with France last month.

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SOVIET PURCHASE OF WESTERN SHIPS

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[redacted] in the current depressed shipping markets, the Soviets should have no trouble acquiring secondhand ships, and Liberty-type ships are almost certainly available in and around Panama.

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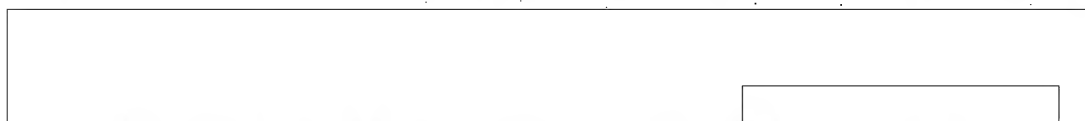
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[redacted] Since one of the main purposes of purchasing ships for the Cuban trade would be to avoid US restrictions, immediate transfer of the ships to Western flags is not likely.

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[redacted] the Soviets had purchased four Liberty ships

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The purchase of a considerable number of Liberty ships would be sound economics for the Soviets insofar as the Cuban trade is concerned. At current prices, a Liberty ship would cost the Soviets the equivalent of only 6 to 8 months expenditure for the charter of a ship for the Cuban trade.

The use of Liberty ships would also enable the Soviets to withdraw from the Cuban run a number of their largest and newest ships now occupied almost exclusively with the Cuban trade.

[REDACTED]

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